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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/595,079	01/31/2006	Takaya Yamauchi	58921US004	2209
32692	7590	10/10/2006	EXAMINER	
3M INNOVATIVE PROPERTIES COMPANY			MOONEY, MICHAEL P	
PO BOX 33427			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
ST. PAUL, MN 55133-3427			2883	

DATE MAILED: 10/10/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/595,079	YAMAUCHI ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Michael P. Mooney	2883

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 7 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1/31/06</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102b as being anticipated by Huebscher et al. (5042902).

Huebscher et al. teaches an optical fiber connecting device for connecting uncoated fiber elements of a pair of optical fibers with each other in an abutment condition (e.g., figs. 2-3), comprising a fiber-element securing member 24 for securing an uncoated fiber element of an optical fiber (30A, 32A), and a sheath holding mechanism (e.g., 42, 44, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90) capable of holding a sheath portion (30, 32) of the optical fiber, in a fixed state, with the uncoated fiber element thereof being secured by said fiber-element securing member 24, wherein: said sheath holding mechanism (e.g., 42, 44, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90) includes a holding element (86, 88) elastically deformable independently from said fiber-element securing member 24; and said holding element (86, 88) defines a passage for guiding an optical fiber outside of said fiber-element securing member 24 (e.g., figs. 2-3), and presses and holds a sheath portion of the optical fiber in said passage by an elastic restoring force of the holding element (86, 88; figs. 2-3).

Thus claim 7 is met.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-6 are allowed.

The prior art, either alone or in combination, does not disclose or render obvious an optical fiber connecting device wherein: said sheath holding mechanism includes an elastically deformable holding element provided in said actuating member; and said holding element defines in said body a passage for guiding an optical fiber, and is elastically deformed due to a motion of said actuating member on said body for operating said fiber-element securing member toward said closed position, to press and hold a sheath portion of the optical fiber in said passage by an elastic restoring force of the holding element in combination with the rest of claim 1.

It is noted that the claim 1 is allowable because the unique combination of each and every specific element stated in the claim.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael P. Mooney whose telephone number is 571-272-2422. The examiner can normally be reached during weekdays, M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Frank G. Font can be reached on 571-272-2415. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for

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published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Michael P. Mooney
Examiner
Art Unit 2883



Frank G. Font
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2883

FGF/mpm
9/26/06